# "Where the Frenchman Flows"

*A Four Act Comedy Drama by George Kearns*

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# "*Where the Frenchman Flows*"

## FOUR ACT COMEDY DRAMA

BY

## GEORGE KEARNS.

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## COSTUMES.

BOB: Act I and II, Khaki suit; leggins; gray flannel shirt; broad brimmed hat. Act III—Same and rain coat. Act IV—Neat business suit.

STANTON: Act I and II—Stylish riding suit. Act III—Plain suit, rubber boots, rain coat. Act IV—Plain business suit Beard on wire for disguise.

SKILLY—Act I—Old coat and pants, dark shirt, cap. Act II—Plain suit. Act III—Same and rain coat. Act IV—Neat suit, over jockey suit. Jockey suit on entrance after race.

MOSE—Act I and II—Khaki pants, dark shirt, cap. Act III—Same with rain coat. Act IV—Overalls and jumper overdress. For second entrance, "Loud", flashy suit.

LUCY HOLDEN—Acts I and II—Stylish riding dress, whip. Act III—Plain dark dress and rain coat. Act IV—Stylish traveling dress.

SUE—Acts I and II—Neat house dress; apron. Act IV—Stylish dress but in loud colors (not farcical) buttons, badges, etc., as are usually collected at a state fair pinned on dress.

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## PROPERTIES.

Act I—Large clothes basket; Clean clothes (ironed); 2 large table cloths (white and colored); iron; table; 3 kitchen chairs; rocking chair; small stand table; work basket, with knitting; Bible, (old); sideboard (plain); dishes; rifle; live hen; several pieces of wood; bucket; pan; potatoes; knife; cup; piece of pie; lump of sugar; sandwich; lamp (practical); large blueprint; riding whip.

Act II—Bench; old chair; field glasses; revolver; several lemons.

Act III—Work bench; tools, long necked bottle of oil; large watch; engine, (see scene plot); 2 lanterns, (practical); revolver; Rain effect may be made with handful of shot on snare drum; bass drum for thunder and explosions; powder flashes (3); row boat, oar.

Act IV—Bench; saddle; bridles; money (bills); camera; hyperdermic needle.

Cocoanut shells for horse effect.

NOTE:—At climax of Third Act, balance boat so it will rock, as on water. Mask front about half way up with blue cloth, splashed with white, and pull from side as boat is rocked to give water effect.

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# "Where the Frenchman Flows"

## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

BOB RANDALL: Lead, age about 25.
MORRIS STANTON: Heavy; age about 30.
SKILLY: Juvenile; age about 20.
MOSE: Negro; age about 25.
LUCY HOLDEN: Lead; age about 22.
SUE: Juvenile; age about 18.

## "WHERE THE FRENCHMAN FLOWS."

### Act I. Living Room at Bob Randalls.

Scene—Interior. Kitchen set in 3. Box set. Door in flat, R. C. Large window in flat L. C., hung with sash curtain. Door R, Table, R. C., Large clothes basket with white table-cloth in front of table. Chairs R. and L of table. Small table L with small work basket and Bible on it. Old fashioned rocking chair R of table. Chair up L. Plain sideboard with dishes between door and window in flat. Rifle in corner up L. Exterior backing in 4, wood set. Lights up for rise, but darken for close of act.

Discovered—Sue at table R, ironing. Ironed clothes on end of table. Large table cloth in basket.

SUE—There, that's the last piece, and I'm mighty glad of it. Gee, but I'm tired. I don't mind the ironing so much, but on a hot day like this it's no fun I can tell you. But then I oughtn't to kick for Bob's been awful good to me. If it hadn't been for him no telling where I'd be now. Chasing the street maybe, or hashing in a grubbery. Gee, it's tough to be an orphan. Kids ought to be more careful in selecting their parents and not pick out sickly ones like mine were. Well, I guess it couldn't be helped. I got a bad start, but maybe I'll do better now on an easy track. (Looks off R). Six o'clock, time to get Bob's supper, got done just in time. (Comes in front of table ,discovers table cloth). Now what do you think of that? Here I've done gone and forgot that table cloth, and the irons are cold, and I've got to get supper—(sighs) It's our best company table cloth too. (Spreads table cloth over basket). Don't believe there's any hurry, anyway, as we're not likely to have company very soon. I'll just leave it there and

finish it after supper—maybe. Fires most out, too, and no wood in. Mose never does bring in enough. Wonder, where he is. (At door flat, calls) Mose—Mose.

MOSE—(In distance, L) Ise a coming.

SUE—Well, hurry.

MOSE—(Rapidly coming nearer) Ise a coming.

SUE—Well, I should say you were. Wonder what's the matter? I never knew Mose to hurry so before. (Comes down L C).

MOSE—(Crosses window, running, enter C. D. Has one shoe off, wears heavy colored socks, has string tied around sock as around big toe. String reaches out through door behind scene) Oh, Missie Sue,—Missie Sue—

SUE—Well, what's the matter?

MOSE—(Excited) Ise done been a fishing down there in the big ditch—yes'm—I done went down dare—and sot down under one of them trees, and put a big hunk of liber on my hook, and spit on it—den I tie it'rou nd my toe and frow it out in the water, and den I lay down under the trees, and first thing I knowed I done had a bite that most pulled me into the water and I grabbed the tree and hung on and something kept a pulling on dat line, and dis nigger thought he was a goner—and I pulled and pulled—

Sue—Yes, yes, you pulled—

MOSE—Yes'm I pulled—

SUE—And the line broke?

MOSE—No'm you done started to call me—an' I woke up.

SUE—Oh, pshaw, then we won't have any fish for supper after all.

MOSE—No'm the kind I caught ain't very substantial.

SUE—You're a great fisherman, I don't think. What did you do with your line when you woke up?

MOSE—I done forgot all about that; spect it am still tied to my foot. (Discovers line. Unties it from toe and begins to wind it up.) Dat line pulls mighty hard, Missie Sue. You don't reckon dat fish am on the end do you?

SUE—No, of course not.

MOSE—Dare am something on dis line, shore as you am born.

SUE—What is it, Mose?

MOSE—Don't know—jes' keep quiet. (Both watch door; Mose winds up string, pulls live hen through door. String fast-

ened to chicken's leg.) I done cotch something after all, Missie Sue.

SUE—Yes, and you'll catch it from Bob if you don't let that hen go.

MOSE—Ise done gwine to let her go, but she wants to be more careful next time. (Exits D F with hen.)

SUE—Mose, bring me in some wood.

MOSE—(Outside) All right.

SUE— (Carries ironed clothes off R then returns).

MOSE—(Enters D F with several pieces of woods, exits R).

SUE—Bob coming yet?

MOSE—(Off R, heard at stove) No'm he's down at the ditch.

SUE—Put in plenty of wood, Mose.

MOSE—(Off R) Yes'm. (Enters R) Say, Missie Sue, hab you all got any pie?

SUE—Why, Mose, I'll have supper ready in a few minutes.

MOSE—Yes'm, but I done got to feed the horses, and milk the cows, and it's gwine to be quite a spell before dis nigger gets his supper.

SUE—Well, Mose, if you'll bring me in a bucket of water I'll give you a lunch before supper.

MOSE—All right, Ise done gwine to get that water right away. (Exits R, returns with bucket, and exits D F).

SUE—(Exits R and returns with pan of potatoes and knife).

MOSE—(Enters D F, with water) Here comes Miss Lucy and some fellow I neber seed before.

SUE—Lucy Holden? What does she want here? (Pours water on potatoes, stands back of table, starts to peel them).

MOSE—I don't know. 'Spect she come ober to see us.

SUE—Well, she needn t come to see me.

MOSE—Don't you like her, Missie Sue?

SUE—No, I don't. She can always wear good clothes and don't have to dirty her hands with house work, and she's been to the city, and I'll bet Bob's getting stuck on her.

LUCY—(Off L) I don't suppose Mr. Randall is at home but we can inquire.

Enter Lucy Holden and Morris Stanton D F. Lucy comes down C, Stanton, L C and Mose L.

LUCY—Hello, Susie, is Mr. Randall home?

SUE—No, he ain't.

LUCY—Will he be here soon?

SUE—Guess so, he's down to the ditch.

LUCY—We'll wait for him then if you don't mind. Mr. Stanton wishes to see him. Mr. Stanton, this is Sue.

STANTON—I'm charmed to meet you, Miss Susie.

SUE—Same to you.

Sue shakes hand with Stanton, her hands wet, then returns to work. Stanton angry, dries hand on hankerchief. Lucy sits R of table. Mose laughs until Stanton look at him angrily.

LUCY—How homelike it is here, and how neat you keep things, Sue. Do you do all the work?

SUE—Yes'm. I've been keeping house for Bob nearly five years now.

Stanton and Mose talk together, L.

LUCY—It is very good of you to stay here and work for Bob—Mr. Randall as you do.

SUE—'Taint nothing. I don't never want to do anything else but keep house for Bob, and (directly to Lucy) he'd better not bring any other woman here to take my place.

LUCY—Oh, I'm sure he's not thinking of doing that. I've heard it said he considers himself very fortunate in having you here.

SUE—(Relenting a little) Bob's been awful good to me He gave me a home when I was a little street waif, and he says when I get older he's going to send me to one of them ladies' semitaries to learn to play the piano and be a lady. I'd rather not go, but I will if he says so. Bob's sure been good to me.

LUCY—Mr. Randall is one of the best men I know.

Lucy and Sue talk aside.

STANTON—And you say the ditch is almost completed?

MOSE—'Spect dey am most through. Done heard Marse Bob say yesterday wouldn't take long to finish now.

STANTON—And what is Mr. Randall's idea of this undertaking?

MOSE—Well, I don't jest understand the projectation myself, but I done hears Marse Bob say as how if they built a dam across the Frenchman right here dey could store the water up, and when it got dry down the valley, they could let it out, as they wanted it.

STANTON—I see; a very practical idea. And what part do you take in these modern improvements?

MOSE—Me? Why I done care for Marse Bob's live stock.

STANTON—Live stock?

MOSE—Yes, sah. Marse Bob done raise some fine horses. Aint you neber heard of Claude S?

STANTON—Claude S? Yes, I have. The sire of some of the finest and fastest horses in the West.

MOSE—Dat's dem. Marse Bob's done got some of dem horses and they's dandies.

STANTON—You interest me. I'd like to have a look at them if you don't mind.

MOSE—Don't mind at tall, sah. Come right along, I'll show you.

STANTON—(To Lucy) Will you excuse me? Mose is going to show me some of the live stock.

MOSE—Dey's down in the barn, right this way.

Stanton and Mose exit D F.

LUCY—Don't let me hinder you in your work, Sue. I'd like to watch you get supper, if it wont bother you.

SUE—It wont bother me, Miss Lucy. I'm going to put the potatoes on.

LUCY—I'll go with you. I've never done any cooking, but I think it would be interesting. (Exits R.)

SUE—Well, maybe she isn't so bad after all, but I'm suspicious of her wanting to watch me cook. I'll just keep an eye on her and Bob. (Exits R.)

Skilly looks in at window cautiously, then enters room. Is alert and watchful.

MOSE—(Off L) Missie Sue—Missie Sue.

SUE—(Off R) What is it, Mose?

Skilly alarmed, looks around for place to hide; discovers clothes basket, crawls in it, pulls table cloth over him.

MOSE—(Entering) Missie Sue—

SUE—(Entering R) What do you want, Mose?

MOSE—I done forgot to shet the barn door and dat Cataract horse got out and won't let me cotch him, and I got to hab a lump of sugar to entice him with.

SUE—All right.

MOSE—And, Missie Sue, you all aint done forgot about dat little lunch hab you?

SUE—No, I'll bring that, too. (Exits R.)

MOSE—(Sits at table.) Yes, dat am the smartest horse—he done knows Marse Bob gwine to be mad cause I didn't shut dat door, and he's gwine to stay out 'till he gets his sugar.

SUE—(Enters R with sandwich, piece of pie and lump of sugar.) Here you are, Mose.

MOSE—Thankee, Missie Sue, thankee.

Sue exits R.

MOSE—Now Ise gwine to sit right here and eat dis here sandwich first—den I can eat my pie when I go back. (Eats.) Yes, sir, dat horse am smart; he lets me get so close to him, and when he sees I aint got no sugar he runs away, but when he sees the sugar he comes right up and takes it out of my hand—

As he talks he lets his hand hang over edge of table, and on "my hand," Skilly, who has been cautiously watching Mose, takes sandwich and again hides under table cloth.

—and lets me lead him right back to the barn. (Starts to eat, puzzled over loss of sandwich.) I dont jest remember eatin' dat sandwich. (Takes a bite of pie, hand then as before.) Dat sure am good pie. Ise gwine to eat it slower, then I'll know Ise got it. Den Ise goin' down and show Marse Stanton how dat horse done eat sugar right out of my hand—

Skilly (Takes pie, hides as before.)

—because he laughed because I couldn't cotch dat horse. (Discovers loss of pie. Backs away from table.) I don't remember eating dat pie, but it sure am gone. I had a sandwich and dat am gone—and I had a pie and dat am gone—but dere am the sugar—(Captures sugar by suddenly jumping for it and putting his cap over it). Ise got you, and I'll just take you along before you am gone. (Exits C D, running.)

SKILLY—(Leaving basket). Gee, that tasted good—I was starving. Glad the nigger didn't catch on. Must get out of here. I'll take a look around and see what kind of people they are, and if they look all right, I'll strike them for something more to eat.

SUE—(Off R.) I'll see if they are coming, Miss Lucy.

Skilly hides in basket. Sue enters R, crosses to window, looks out and in turning sees Skilly's arm as he arranges tablecloth. Sue is alarmed, gets rifle, covers basket.

SUE—Now, Mr. Burglar in that basket, just stick your head out and give an account of yourself before I spoil our best tablecloth.

Skilly uncovers; both look at each other in surprise.

SKILLY—Sue!

SUE—Skilly!

LUCY—(Off R.) Are they coming, Sue?

Skilly hides in basket.

LUCY—(Enters R.) Why, Sue, what are you doing with that rifle?

SUE—Just—just—sweeping the floor, Miss Lucy.

LUCY—Sweeping the floor?

SUE—Oh, no, I mean I—I—just thought I saw something alive and I wanted to see what it was.

LUCY—Did you find out?

SUE—Yes'm, no'm. I mean it's gone now.

LUCY—Well, I wish you'd put that gun away, you might hurt someone.

Lucy crosses L, Sue puts rifle in corner, returns to table. Stanton and Mose enter D F.

STANTON—(Entering D F) A mighty fine horse, Mose, do you think Mr. Randall would sell him?

MOSE—No, indeed, Marse Bob never sell dat horse.

Stanton crosses L to Lucy. Sue nervous and worried. Mose comes down to table then remembers experience and "shies" away, goes back to door.

STANTON—I've been having a look at Mr. Randall's horses. He has one unusually fine one. I wonder if he would sell him?

Sue goes to door, talks aside with Mose.

LUCY—I doubt it. I know the horse you mean. Bob—Mr. Randall takes particular pride in him, allows no one to ride him but himself, and I don't think he could be persuaded to sell.

Skilly cautiously looks out.

STANTON—But it's a shame to allow the horse to remain here doing nothing. I'd put him on the track—he'd beat anything on the circuit.

Sue gets colored tablecloth from sideboard, prepares to set table.

LUCY—Oh, Morris, thinking of horse racing again! I thought you had given it up?

STANTON—I thought so too, but the chance with a horse like that would be too good to lose.

SKILLY—(Aside.) Morse Stanton!

He is discovered by Sue who thrown the second table cloth over him.

LUCY—Why, what's the matter, Sue?

SUE—Nothing—I was just shooing a fly.

MOSE—Here comes Marse Bob now. (Exits to L).

BOB—(Outside.) Hello, Mose, got the stock all fed? How's Cataract? Give him a good feed, Mose. (Enters D F.) Hello, Sue, how's supper? (Discovers others.) Why, Lucy, this is a surprise, I didn t know you were here. (Shakes hands.)

LUCY—I just arrived this morning and thought I would ride over and see all of you. Allow me to present Mr. Stanton, Mr. Randall.

BOB—Glad to meet you, Mr. Stanton. You must excuse my seeming inhospitality, but I was down on the ditch. Sue, why didn't you send Mose down—

STANTON—Don't apologize, Mr. Randall, and don't blame Sue. We didn't wish to disturb you in your work.

BOB—Well, I'm through now, got everything finished and the ditch is complete. But sit down—

Stanton turns to rocking chair L.

BOB—Not there, Mr. Stanton, let me give you a chair over here. Susie, let's move this basket. (Starts R).

SUE—(Stopping him). Oh, no, no—I mean, let me move it. I've got that tablecloth spread out to dry. I'll move it. (Tries to shove basket.)

BOB—What's the matter?

SUE—Nothing—nothing at 'tall. (Aside) Oh, gee, what'll I do?

BOB—I'm afraid it's too heavy for you—let me—

SUE—Oh, no—no—(She lifts cloth by corners, holding her arms apart forming a screen for Skilly who leaves basket. She covers Skilly's exit R, talking as she does so and pushing basket with knees.) You see, this is our best table cloth, and I just laid it out there to dry, and I didn't want to wrinkle it. (Aside) My arms are broken. Skilly, if you aint gone I can't help you any more. (She lets her arms fall and drops table cloth into basket.)

Lucy sits R of table, Stanton L. Bob C. Sue lights lamp, sets it on table. Darker outside. Sue sets table.

STANTON—I have heard something of your irrigation project, and as I have interests here, would like to know just what your plan is.

BOB—You have property here?

STANTON—Yes, I own the quarter-section southwest of here. It belonged to an uncle of mine, but on his recent death came to me.

BOB—My plan will not affect you any as your place is already irrigated. It is for the people further down the valley. While the Frenchman carries a great deal of water in the spring season, the fall is so great, that it is soon gone or else sweeps everything before it. I have studied the stream carefully and have found that here was the best place to build a dam and put in a gate. Here the valley is wider, giving a larger storage capacity. In a short time I can supply the valley with all the water needed for irrigation.

STANTON—You are sole owner of this project?

BOB—Yes, by means of a mortgage I have been able to handle it.

STANTON—You say the work is finished?

BOB—Yes, they close the gates tonight.

STANTON—And will all this water lie on your own land?

BOB—Yes. I have a plan here that will explain things better. (Gets blue print from sideboard and spreads it on table.) Here you see is the course of the Frenchman, entering my land here. Here is the dam, giving me all this enclosed part of the valley for the lake.

STANTON—This must be my land lying here.

BOB—Yes.

STANTON—And my ditches are filled from this stream?

BOB—Yes. You see your ditches are supplied from above the lake so your supply will be in no way diminished.

STANTON—No, rather the other, I think.

BOB—What do you mean?

STANTON—That when your lake begins to fill my land will be flooded.

BOB—No; except in the case of a freshet the water in your main ditch will only be raised a few inches.

STANTON—But in case of a flood?

BOB—If you anticipate a flood it would be advisable to raise the banks a foot or so.

STANTON—I'll have to look over the land first.

MOSE—(Enters D F.) Marse Bob, the men say to tell you they's gwine to close the gate.

BOB—All right, Mose. Shall we go down and watch the operation?

LUCY—Yes, indeed. Then we must be going back, as it is getting late. My riding whip—

SUE—I'll get it. (Exits R.)

STANTON—If you don't mind, I'll walk ahead. I'd like another look at that horse of yours, Mr. Randall.

BOB—All right, Mose will go with you.

MOSE—I'll done have to light a lantern.

Stanton and Mose exit D F. Lucy and Bob C.

BOB—It's good to see you back again.

LUCY—And I enjoy being back.

BOB—Going to stay long?

LUCY—I don't know. I had to come on business and will probably be here several weeks.

BOB—Who is this Mr. Stanton?

LUCY—He's from Denver, too. I have known him for several years; when he learned I was coming down here he came with me as he wished to see the land his uncle left him.

BOB—Well, I hope you decide to stay. We'll take a ride up the ditch some time—

LUCY—It's been quite a while since we rode the ditch.

BOB—Yes; I guess the last time was just before you went away to school. I remember now—you had on a pink dress, and a sunbonnet, and your hair was in two pigtails. We didn't have any saddles, and you rode—

LUCY—Oh, Bob!

BOB—dad's little gray pony.

LUCY—I remember, and we had a race.

BOB—And your sunbonnet didn't have any strings on it, so you tied it on with your pigtails.

LUCY—I'm afraid we didn't watch the ditch very close that day.

BOB—No, we left that to Dad. Poor old dad, what has been finished today was his dream.

LUCY—And you have realized it. You deserve to be congratulated. Let me be the first. (Offers her hand.)

BOB—(Taking her hand.) Thank you. When will we take that ride?

LUCY—Oh, almost any day.

BOB—I'll let you ride Cataract.

LUCY—That will be fine.

BOB—Havn't got a pink dress you could wear have you?

LUCY—I'm afraid not, why?

BOB—Thought maybe we could make ourselves like we were that day, everything else has changed so.

LUCY—But we must change too, you know.

Enter Sue R, with whip.

BOB—Yes, I suppose so, but you will always be the same to me.

SUE—(Putting whip between them.) Here's your whip.

LUCY—Oh, thank you, Susie. (To Bob) Hadn't we better go, they will be waiting for us. (Lucy and Bob exit D F.)

SUE—I'm suspicious of her. Come in, Skilly.

SKILLY—(At D R.) Is he gone?

SUE—Who? Bob?

SKILLY—Bob? No, that other fellow, Morse Stanton.

SUE—Mr. Stanton? Do you know him?

SKILLY—(Entering.) Do I know that guy? Say, if it wasn't for him—aw, well, never mind.

SUE—Tell me, Skilly.

SKILLY—I will, sometime. Is he living around here?

SUE—I don't know. I never saw him before.

SKILLY—I don't want him to see me. And don't you have anything to do with him, Sue.

SUE—Oh, dear no, we aint in the same set. (Affected walk R.)

SKILLY—Gee, what a long tail our cat's got. Say, Sue, you're looking swell since the last time I saw you.

SUE—Things have been going great with me, Skilly, since those days we used to sell papers and stand over the gratings at the restaurants to get warm and smell the cooking and imagine we had a meal. Bob's given me a dandy home. He's the best fellow there is. But what have you been doing since I left?

SKILLY—I got tired of selling papers, and went out to the track and finally got a chance to ride. I always wanted to you know. I was on the circuit for two years and hobnobbed with the high-tones, I tell you. Then I got in bad—

SUE—Tell me about it.

SKILLY—Aw, it wouldn't do any good, you couldn't help me.

SUE—No, but maybe Bob could.

SKILLY—Bob? Do you think he would?

SUE—Sure, if I told him you were a friend of mine.

STANTON—(Off L). I'll bring up the horses and we can start back at once.

LUCY—(Off L.) All right, I'll wait in the house for you.

Skilly and Sue exit R, hurriedly. Lucy enters D F. Comes down to the table, lays whip on table, crosses L and sits in rocking chair. Pause Bob enters D F comes

down C. Lucy looks up at Bob and smiles as though expecting him to speak.

BOB—That's mother's chair you're sitting in—don't get up. You see, mother don't need it now. She used to always sit there, ever since I can remember. She wasn t strong and couldn't get around much. I used to help her do the work around the house when I was a little chap, but after father died, I had to do his work and that made it harder for mother, so we took Susie in to help. She was a waif, I got her in Omaha, and the Judge gave me the right to be a big brother or a father to her. Mother kept getting weaker and weaker and finally I had to carry her out here in the mornings and back to her room at night. She'd sit there all day looking out across the valley, or else reading in the Bible, and in the evening after my work was done, we'd sit here in the twilight and talk of things that were only for us. Then one day I couldn't carry her out any more—the last time she left her room they took her through the door—she's sleeping out there beside father. After she was gone I never moved her chair, or the little table, and her Bible always laid there, just as she left it, only in the evening I open it, and read a chapter, and then it almost seems that she was here again. All the folks around here know about Mother's chair—and you're the only one to sit there since she died.

LUCY—(Rising.) Oh, I'm so sorry—I didn't know—I didn't mean—

BOB—I don't mean it that way, Lucy. I mean you are the only one I'd rather see sit there than Mother.

LUCY—Don't—don't say any more—

BOB—I must tell you, Lucy—tell you what has been in my heart for years—tell you that I love you, and—

LUCY—No—no—don't say any more—I should have told you—I—I am engaged to Mr. Morris Stanton.

A pause. Bob, surprised and stunned at news, bows his head. Lucy crosses to table, gets whip, up to D F, slowly as though expecting Bob to speak to her but as he does not notice her she exits D F. Pause. Sue enters R, and in dumb show persuades Skilly to enter.

SUE—Say, Bob, your supper's getting cold.

BOB—I don't believe I want any supper tonight, Sue. (Crosses to table and picks up Bible.) Have you had supper, Sue?

SUE—Yes, me and Skilly had a lunch.

BOB—Skilly?

SUE—Yes, this is Skilly. I used to know him when I was only a kid on the street; he's me old pal, and I want to know can he stay here?

BOB—Any friend of yours it always welcome, Sue.

SUE—Thank you, Bob, you're awful good. Going to read now?

Bob sits R of table; Sue puts lamp on table then sits R of Bob, and Skilly R of Sue. Bob opens Bible, turns the leaves. Horses heard outside, close, leaving and dying away in distance. Bob listens. Skilly listens apprehensively. Sue defiant and proud.

CURTAIN.

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## ACT II—DOORYARD OF RANDALL'S HOUSE.

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Exterior. Wood wings R, and back drop either wood or river scene. Set house L, one story, with porch. Door in house and window to correspond with Act 1. Bench R C. Old chair near porch. Flowers and vines on and over porch.

Discovered. Skilly seated on bench R, looking off R through pair of field glasses.

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SKILLY—Yep, that's him all right—Morse Stanton—one of the biggest gamblers and race track crooks in the country. Mixing in with the swell people here, and me, that knows enough to send him to the pen got to hide like a rat. Wonder if he's trying to marry that girl? Gee, she's in for a tough time of it if she does. I think Bob's kinder stuck on her. I don't see why she don't fall in love with him. He's a swell chap all right. Told me to make myself at home here and never wanted to know my pedigree at all. I'll tell him some day though, maybe he can help me. I'd like to get a chance to bawl that crooked guy, but it wouldn't do any good, only get me in bad again. (Looks.) You did me dirt, Morse Stanton, but some day I'll give you cause to remember Skilly.

Enter Sue from house.

SUE—Hello, Skilly, what you looking at?

SKILLY—Nothing.

SUE—Do you see it?

SKILLY—Yes, I see him.

SUE—Who?

SKILLY—Morse Stanton—want to look?

SUE—Naw, I don't want to see him. He aint in our class.

SKILLY—That's right. He aint to be compared with Bob.

SUE—Well I should say not.

SKILLY—Aint Bob the swell chap? Do you know, Sue, if I had the running of things I'd make Bob rich and have him marry Miss Lucy——

SUE—Well, I wouldn't, she's not good enough for him.

SKILLY—I don't see why. Maybe you want him yourself.

SUE—I guess I'd make him a good wife.

SKILLY—Say, you have got a swell opinion of yourself. See here, Sue, you get that idea out of your head. I'm going to get cleared up some day, then I can get back to riding, and after I make a stake you and me's going to get married.

SUE—Say, you have got a swell opinion of yourself. I'm never going to marry. Bob is going to send me to school and after I learn a lot I'm going to a foreign country and help educate the heathen.

SKILLY—You can get one to educate here without going to any foreign country.

SUE—I'll have to see what Bob says about it.

SKILLY—I've been thinking it over since I've been here, and maybe it would be a good idea to tell Bob about my trouble. Do you think he'd help me?

SUE—If anybody could help you, Skilly, it would be Bob.

SKILLY—It ain't that I'm afraid to tell, only no one will believe me.

SUE—You tell him. He'll know whether you're lying or not.

SKILLY—(Looking L.) Here he comes now.

Bob enters from house.

BOB—Hello, Sue; Hello, Skilly.

SKILLY—Howdy, Mr. Bob.

BOB—Well, Skilly, how do you like the country by this time?

SKILLY—Fine, sir. I'd like to stay if—if—

BOB—Well?

SKILLY—(Looking R) If it wasn't for some things. I'd like to tell you if you don't mind.

BOB—(Sitting). All right, Skilly; Sue—

SKILLY—I'd like to have her hear too, we're old pals you know.

Sue sits on bench R of Skilly.

SKILLY—I used to be a jockey. You may have heard of me? I'm Skilly Kelley—

BOB—(In amazement.) Not THE Skilly Kelley?

SKILLY—Yes, Sir.

BOB—The best jockey on the Western circuit.

SKILLY—Yes, sir. I rode only the best—always winners. Last season I went out with a new one—he had a good string and we took everything. Then we went down to enter the Derby. I knew what my horse could do, and felt sure we could take that. The night before the race he come to me and says, 'My horse will be the favorite in the betting tomorrow, but he's not to win, do you understand?' I didn't say anything; I'd never been up against a thing like that before and I didn't know just what I ought to do. I didn't see him again until just before the race, then he boosted me into the saddle and whispered, 'Remember what I told you—don't run first.' We got away fine —my horse took the lead but when we reached the quarter I pulled him down to third and we kept that to the half, then the pace grew faster, I let him out a bit,at the three-quarter he was running second, we turned into the home stretch—three of us were neck and neck—I heard the shouts of the crowd—the pound of the hoofs—the movement of the horse under me that should be a winner—I gave him his head and we raced home a winner by two lengths.

SUE—Hurrah for you.

BOB—That's the right stuff in you, Skilly.

SKILLY—He didn't say anything, but his face was black with rage. Well, that night the secretary's safe was robbed, some of the money was found in my room, and—well, I got a chance to skip and took it.

BOB—You should have stayed and faced it.

SKILLY—What chance would I have with them?

BOB—That's right. Well, what do you think?

SKILLY—That the safe was robbed by Morse Stanton—

BOB—(Jumping up.) Hold on. (Crosses to Skilly and lays hand on his shoulder.) Say that again, will you?

SKILLY—That Morse Stanton robbed the safe and put the blame on me.

BOB—That's a serious acquisition, my boy, and unless you have good reasons—

SKILLY—I know he lost heavily on the race.

BOB—But that don't prove anything.

SKILLY—I know it.

BOB—You are accusing another man of a serious offense, and without proof, I can't see how you hope to have your story believed.

SUE—Aw, Mr. Bob, Skilly didn't do nothing crooked. Why I've known him ever since we were kids, and he never stole anything. Can't you do something to help him?

BOB—I can't see now how anything can be done. I'll think it over. You are welcome to stay here, Skilly; keep out of Stanton's sight, he will be gone in a few days, then perhaps I can help you.

SKILLY—Thank you, Mr. Bob. The Lord knows and Sue does too, that I wouldn't do no crooked work.

BOB—No, I don't believe you would Skilly, and to show that I trust you, and as you seem to understand horses, I'm going to put Cataract under your care.

SKILLY—Thank you, Mr. Bob; I ll take care of him and make him a winner.

BOB—None of that. I don't want to make him a race horse.

SKILLY—Aw, that's too bad. Not even one little race?

BOB—No, not even one, Skilly.

SKILLY—All right, but it aint treating him right. But I'll take care of him, you'll find I'm straight. I'll start to work right now. Come on, Sue, let's go down to the barn. (Goes L.)

Sue—All right.

Skilly exits L U E.

SUE—(Putting her arms around Bob's neck.) You're awful good, Bob. (Kisses him.) (As she exits, running,) Wait for me, Skilly.

BOB—Stanton a race track crook. And she's going to marry him. I can't tell her on the strength of Skilly's story. Not now. (Goes L.) But if Skilly's telling the truth she ought to know it.

Horses heard R in distance.

BOB—(Looking R.) They're coming. Lucy would want to know it if Stanton's the kind of man Skilly says he is. She must know it before it is too late. I must think what to do.

Bob exits into house. Horses heard nearer off R, stop. Mose enters L U E. Lucy and Stanton enter R U E.

STANTON—Just look after our horses, will you, Mose?

MOSE—Yes, sah. (Exits R U E.)

STANTON—It's good to get in the shade here. I had no idea the sun was so warm.

LUCY—Yes, it is warm, and the signs are we will have rain soon.

STANTON—I can't see any signs of it.

LUCY—No, you haven't lived here long enough, but an old resident like I am can tell.

STANTON—I had forgotten, this is your old home.

LUCY—I lived here until I was twelve, but since I have been at school, I have been able to visit here only every year or so.

STANTON—Have you known this Mr. Randall long?

LUCY—Oh, yes, all my life. His father settled here at the same time as mine. He died while Bob was only a boy, and Bob has managed the place ever since. This irrigation project was a plan of his father's and Bob has worked hard to carry it out.

STANTON—It is a wonderful project but rather expensive for one man to handle unless he is wealthy.

LUCY—Yes, he told me it took all he had, besides what money he could raise on the place.

STANTON—But he has another source of income if he would only use it.

LUCY—What do you mean?

STANTON—His horses. One in particular that he calls Cataract I believe would make a fortune on the track.

LUCY—Perhaps. But Bob would never consent to it. I know others have spoken to him of it, but he does not believe in gambling.

STANTON—With a horse like that it wouldn't be gambling—it would be a sure thing. I could take him—

LUCY—And you told me you had given up all that.

STANTON—So I have, but if I owned him, I know where he could be sold at a good price.

LUCY—Well, you'll never own him, for Bob won't sell.

STANTON—He might be persuaded to if he is short of money. The horse is doing him no good here and it is a shame to let such an animal go to waste.

LUCY—You couldn't persuade him of anything like that.

STANTON—No, perhaps not, but couldn't you? Tell him you have taken a fancy to the horse, want him for yourself, and as an old friend I am sure you could persuade him to sell.

LUCY—And I absolutely refuse to take advantage of such friendship and be a partner to such a scheme.

STANTON—What is there wrong with it? I will pay what the horse is worth to him—what I do with it afterwards is no concern of his.

LUCY—Still I will not do it.

STANTON—Why not?

LUCY—I will not take advantage of him.

STANTON—Take advantage of him? Don't you suppose he knows the horse has a racing value? And because he does not care to take advantage of it, is that any reason I should not?

LUCY—There is no need to say more on the subject, I will not do it.

STANTON—It seems to me that it is about time you were taking an interest in my affairs.

LUCY—I do, when they are honorable.

STANTON—My affairs are honorable. Because I am shrewd enough to see an opportunity where your thick headed country friend—

LUCY—Stop—I will not hear a word against Bob.

STANTON—(Angry, but controlling himself.) I don't mean to say anything against him, but I am very much disappointed that you do not take the same view of this that I do.

LUCY—No, I do not look at it that way. Let us say no more of it; you do not need the small amount you could make off the sale of the horse, and since you have quit the track you do not need him.

STANTON—Very well, I'll give up the horse, since you wish me to.

LUCY—Thank you, I do wish it.

STANTON—But I still have a favor to ask of you.

LUCY—Well?

STANTON—To set an early date for our wedding.

LUCY—I thought we had decided to wait until fall?

STANTON—I know, but I don't wish to wait that long. Why not say next month?

LUCY—Next month?

STANTON—Yes. Don't you care for me that much? (Sits beside her, starts to put his arm around her.)

LUCY—(Rises, crosses L.) Yes. (Looks into house from where she stands.) I don't know whether I can get ready or not; I'll let you know.

STANTON—You don't know how happy you have made me—to think that in a month I can call you my wife.

Bob enters from house.

BOB—Why, hello, Lucy. Howdy, Mr. Stanton. I ve got to go down to the dam, want to walk down?

STANTON—It's so infernally hot, I'll stay here if you'll excuse me.

LUCY—I'll go, the place interests me greatly.

BOB—I want to see that everything's all right. They've been having heavy rains west of us and the rise may strike us at any time.

STANTON—Anything serious?

BOB—Oh, no. Probably a rise of a few feet in the lake, but then it is best to be prepared.

STANTON—I have been over my place and I find it will not be possible to build my banks any higher at present. The cost would be too high.

BOB—I don't think you need to worry, nothing short of a cloudburst would overflow us.

STANTON—My prospect for a crop this year is fine.

BOB—I am glad to hear it. I haven't much in; this ditch has taken so much of my time, but next year I will make it. Come Lucy. Don't go away, Mr. Stanton, we'll have lunch when we come back.

Bob and Lucy exit L U E.

STANTON—Yes, I must get a crop, every penny I can raise, or I'll be ruined. That last season of racing put me to the bad, but if Lucy marries me next month her money will help out some. If I could only get that horse. Lucy won't help; I must think of some other plan.

Horse heard in distance R, easy start, rapidly increasing, dies away in distance.

STANTON—(Looking off R with glasses) There he goes now—what a beauty—what action—I could clean up on him. There must be some way to get him, but how; how?

Stanton exits R I E. Sue and Mose enter R U E.

MOSE—Ise not sorry Marse Bob done goin' to let dat boy take care of that horse, cause I got so much to do I jest can't look after him.

SUE—(Laughing.) Why Mose, what have you got to do that keeps you so busy?

MOSE—Why, I done got to do the chores around the house, and carry in wood, and say, Missie Sue, you all aint got any pie in there hab you?

SUE—No pie, Mose.

MOSE—Dat's too bad, cause Ise awful hungry, and Marse Bob done say he's gwine to hab me work down at the dam on the engine to open the gate.

SUE—That will just suit you. Something else will do the work while you look on.

MOSE—Yessum, but it done takes brains to run dat engine and dis nigger's brains aint gwine to be in any good condition unless he has plenty to eat.

SUE—Well, Mose, I haven't any pie but there's some cake if that will do.

MOSE—That'll do, Missie Sue, I done think next to pie I likes cake the best anyhow, except watermillion, or chicken, or possum—

Sue exits into house, Mose follows. Lucy and Bob enter L U E.

LUCY—It is indeed wonderful, what you have succeeded in making of the Frenchman. To think that that broad lake was once only a little stream—

BOB—A stream that was always dry when the water was needed, but in the rainy season assumed the proportions of a river that ran riot, doing more harm than good. It is the same stream, Lucy, only I have acted on the principle that should govern all such streams, conceived a plan to store the water until needed.

LUCY—It is an excellent idea, and the amount of water you have there now will do much toward irrigating the valley. (Smiles.) I don't think we'd have any trouble now, Bob, in sailing our boats.

BOB—Do you remember those boats? (They sit R.) I whittled them out of a pine board with my jack knife, and you hunted out some pieces from the rag bags for the sails.

LUCY—And once when I couldn't find any pieces I used my handkerchief for a sail and lost it—and got scolded.

BOB—And I remember once when you started your boat it wouldn't go, and you gave it a push—and fell in. (They both laugh.)

LUCY—What times we used to have—it was a glorious

child's stream, fulfilling childhood's dreams—now it has grown even as we have—and the dream of youth is becoming the reality of age.

BOB—Yes, a reality—and yet, sometimes, I wish we could go back.

LUCY—We can't go back—there are no bridges to the past. (Pause.) You must let me hear how you are getting along with your project; I shall always feel an interest in it.

BOB—Of course. But as you are to be here for the next few months you'll have an opportunity to see what it will do.

LUCY—I won't be here that long. I—I expect to leave the last of this week.

BOB—Why, I had no idea you were going away so soon. I thought you intended staying all summer.

LUCY—I did, at first, but I find it will be necessary for me to leave at once.

BOB—That's too bad. I intended having you over to dinner—Sue's gotten to be a splendid cook, and we haven't had that ride yet.

LUCY—No, we haven't. I'm afraid we'll never have that ride, Bob.

Bob looks at her questioningly.

LUCY—Mr. Sanders and I will probably be married next month.

Bob rises, crosses L. Lucy looks after Bob, rather anxiously.

BOB—Lucy, I wish you all the happiness in the world.

LUCY—Thank you Bob.

An awkward pause. Both are nervous and ill at ease

BOB—Looks like we were going to have rain.

LUCY—Do you think so? We had better be starting back.

BOB—Oh, you have plenty of time, it wont come for hours yet. Come in the house, it's cooler there, and I'll have Sue make some lemonade.

Lucy crosses L to porch.

BOB—Lucy—I'm, I'm sorry you're going away so soon, but I guess you know best. I had hoped things might have been different, but since they can't, you must always look on me as a brother, Lucy—

LUCY—I will, Bob.

BOB—And I want you to be happy—you're going to be happy?

LUCY—(Not looking at Bob.) Yes, I hope to be very happy.

BOB—It is your own choice?

LUCY—Of course, Bob, it is my own choice.

Lucy exits into house.

BOB—Her own choice—then I can never tell her.

Bob exits into house. Stanton enters R U E, hurriedly, excited.

STANTON—What a horse. I never saw such speed in an untrained runner. What would he do after a season on the track? I must have him. That boy can ride, too. I wonder who he is. Here he comes now—there's something strangely familiar about him. I wonder, could it be—I'll watch him.

Stanton exits R I E. Enter Skilly hurriedly, R U E, crosses to house.

SKILLY—(Cautiously.) Sue—Sue.

Sue enters from house.

SKILLY—I rode him Sue, I rode him.

SUE—Rode him—who?

SKILLY—Cataract. And say, he can go—

SUE—(Stopping him.) Sh! Skilly Kelley, if you don't want to lose your happy home, don't ever let Bob know you raced Cataract.

SKILLY—Aw, pshaw, he was just exercising a little. Why Sue, it's a sin not to let that horse run.

SUE—Sin or no sin, if Bob catches you, you'll run faster than that horse ever did.

SKILLY—Well, I can't help it—the horse can run and when I get on him and he starts what can I do?

SUE—Stay off him, Skilly, or you'll hit the road again.

BOB—(Inside.) Are you bringing the lemons, Sue?

SUE—I'm bringing them, Mr. Bob. (To Skilly) I've got to go down to the ice house for some lemons—and remember what I told you.

Sue exits L U E.

SKILLY—Damn. What're they all so fraid to let the horse run, for?

Stanton enters R U E, quietly.

SKILLY—Why he just runs for the love of it. He can beat anything that ever hit the track. I wish I owned him.

STANTON—Suppose I owned him?

SKILLY—(Caught.) Morse Stanton.

STANTON—Yes. Surprised to see me?

SKILLY—No. I knew you were here.

STANTON—I just recognized you. Probably wouldn't, only I saw you riding Cataract, and I knew there was only one jockey in the world could handle a green horse like that. Pretty fast, isn't he?

SKILLY—Oh, he can run a little.

STANTON—Yes he can. I held the watch on him coming back. I'm thinking of buying him.

SKLLY—'Thinking' is right.

STANTON—Perhaps not so remote as you may think. You can help me in this little deal.

SKILLY—Huh, I don't help you on nothing.

STANTON—And I ought not to help you after what you did.

SKILLY—I didn't crack the safe.

STANTON—Well, you were blamed for it, and you're forever barred from riding unless I help you.

SKILLY—Well, there's other things I can do.

STANTON—Of course, but nothing you like as well or can make as much money at. You're a good rider, Skilly, and if you help me I'll put you on easy street.

SKILLY—How?

STANTON—Randall wont put the horse on the track and has even refused to sell him. But if he were made to believe the horse was worthless, he might be persuaded to part with him.

SKILLY—I don't just get you.

STANTON—He's letting you take care of him. Cut down on his feed, no exercise, let him grow stale, knock him at every opportunity. Use every effort you can to get him to sell the animal. Then when the time is right drop me word, and I'll have Johnson—remember Johnson, Skilly?

SKILLY—(Aside.) Another dirty crook.

STANTON—Johnson looks like a farmer—used to run a three-shell game—come along and buy him for a family driving horse. If he thinks he isn't going on the track Randall will sell him.

SKILLY—What do I get out of it?

STANTON—I'll get you back on the track and you can ride him. What do you say?

SKILLY—I didn't say—but I will.

STANTON—Well?

SKILLY—I'll see you in hell first, Morse Stanton.

STANTON—Don't try any of that stuff on me, Kelley, or I'll put you behind the bars.

SKILLY—And I know enough to take you with me.

STANTON—Damn you. You'll do as I say or I'll shut your mouth for you. (Draws revolver.)

Lucy enters from house, has Stanton covered with rifle.

LUCY—Drop it, Morris.

Bob enters from house. Sue enters L U E, carrying lemons.

BOB—Lucy, what are you doing?

LUCY—Just breaking my engagement with Morris Stanton.

Sue starts tossing lemons at Stanton, who stands C, angry.

CURTAIN.

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## ACT III—THE POWER HOUSE.

Scene—Interior. Stone or plain box set. Door in C in flat. Practical window L. Work bench R with tools, and especially a long necked bottle in which is a little oil. R of door on back drop is a water guage; a row of figures from I at top to 40 at bottom, with a block indicator which may be worked by string from behind scenes. L C a square heavy box with wheel brake on top, (practical) and practical brake on side. Small gasoline engine may also be used to fill set. Set wood backing at extreme limit of stage for door and window. Chair. Lights down, lighted lantern on work bench. Thunder, lightning and rain effect outside. A tin trough punched with fine holes and filled with water may be hung over door and window to give rain effect. All characters entering wear rain coats, wet before entering.

Discovered—Mose seated. Indicator on water guage is continually moving as though water was rising; at "30."

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MOSE—Lawdy, lawdy, will you done listen to it rain. Dis nigger aint neber seen it rain so hard since he done lib on de ole Mississipp. Done been raining for two days now and the water am sure getting high back of that dam. (Looks at guage.)

Thirty feet, and dat indicator am bouncin 'round like a popcorn on a hot griddle. (Thunder.) For de Lawds sake I dont like to hear dat thunder. Dey say when it does dat it am de black man in de bad place buttin' his head again de rocks trying to get out. I shore wishes he would. (Up to window, opens it and looks out. Lightning.) Golly, but dere am lots of water out dere. Dis nigger am done getting scared. (Closes window, comes down.) Mr. Bob say for me to stay here, and see that everything am all right, but I done wishes he would gibe somebody else dis job. (Looks at indicator.) She am going up. If de water gets to runnin' over the dam it's done gwine to take this shanty, too. I hope I aint in it then.

Skilly enters, C D.

SKILLY—Hello, Mose, what are you doing?

MOSE—Ise done holding down dis damn dam.

SKILLY—Well, it's something to do. Gee, I aint had anything to do since this rain started. Me and Cataract will get stale as eggs if it dont stop soon.

MOSE—Dat horse shore do miss his exercise. But he had some dis morning.

SKILLY—How's that?

MOSE—He done kicked me out of his stall just for fun.

SKILLY—We sure had him doing a fast mile down that valley road. We've got to get a watch and time him.

MOSE—Ise done got a watch.

SKILLY—Does it run?

MOSE—Sure. (Produces large, cheap watch, shakes it, rattles.) Maybe some of the wheels loose, but she sure runs.

SKILLY—Aw, we got to get a good watch, one that tells seconds to time that horse.

MOSE—Maybe Miss Lucy's got one.

SKILLY—Would she let us have it?

MOSE—Don't know; we might have to tell her what we wanted it for.

SKILLY—Aw, that wouldn't do, she's tell Bob.

MOSE—What's the use of training dat horse; Marse Bob aint going to let us race him.

SKILLY—Well, it's a good thing for the horse and the time may come when he will get a chance to run.

MOSE—Boy, if we could get him in the county fair, wouldnt we clean up?

SKILLY—County fair—he's good enough to go on the circuit and meet any of them.

MOSE—Sh, here comes Marse Bob, now.

Bob enters, C D, carries lighted lantern. Note—storm effect lighter.

BOB—Hello, Mose, everything all right?

MOSE—Yes, sah, but dere's a heap of water back of dat dam, sah.

BOB—(Looks at indicator.) I've just been over the dam—the gates are holding fine—there is no danger. Besides this storm can't last much longer, and we've got several feet to go yet.

MOSE—Done seems to me tho,' the way that thing am bobbin' it goes up about a foot a minute.

BOB—Laughing.) Oh, not as bad as that. If it keeps on though, I'll open the emergency, that will help some.

MOSE—Yes, sah; but I done wish you had brought me one of dem life belts like they done use on de steamboats.

BOB—Mose, I believe you are actually afraid of a little water.

MOSE—No, sah, not just afraid, but you see I was brought up a Methodist.

BOB—You'll feel better when you've had supper.

SKILLY—That's just what I came down to tell you Mose—Sue said to beat it right up to the house if you wanted any supper.

MOSE—Boy, Ise on my way.

BOB—Come back after you've had supper, Mose, we may need you.

MOSE—All right, Marse Bob. (Exit C D.)

SKILLY—Some rain!

BOB—Yes, this is the hardest rain I've ever seen here.

SKILLY—Dam hold all right?

BOB—Oh, yes. If the water gets too high we can use the emergency.

SKILLY—Well, I hope she don't bust. Gee, it wouldn't do a thing to this shanty.

BOB—It certainly would sweep this place away.

SKILLY—And further down the valley—wouldn't it sweep things?

BOB—Skilly, you're a regular crepe hanger. The dam isn't going to break.

SKILLY—Well, I hope not—I'm a dry land sailor.

BOB—Never been around the water?

SKILLY—No; don't know anything except riding horses.

BOB—Skilly, have you been racing Cataract without my knowing it?

SKILLY—Racing him? Gee, you don't have to race that horse, he just naturally runs.

BOB—I know he does, but I was wondering why every time he passed that big tree at the turn of the valley road he tries to make a record for the next two miles.

SKILLY—Does he?

BOB—I think you know it, already. I don't mind you exercising him, Skilly, but I wont have him racing.

SKILLY—Gee, Mr. Bob, it's a sin not to let that horse race.

BOB—I would think from your experience you'd had enough of racing.

SKILLY—Aw, I guess I'm just like that horse—we come by it naturally.

BOB—Well, try and get over it, Skilly; there's lots better things to do than horse racing.

SKILLY—I suppose so, but I don't believe they's as interesting.

BOB—I'm going to need a good man to help me here on the place. I've been watching you, Skilly, and you suit me pretty well. Now if you can get this horse racing out of your head, I'm willing to give you a chance and eventually take you in as a partner.

SKILLY—Do you mean it, Mr. Bob?

BOB—Of course.

SKILLY—I'll do it, Mr. Bob. I'll give up horse racing. I'il settle down and work hard and raise some horses of my own and get a good horse that can run and put him on the circuit—

BOB—Hold on, hold on. I thought you had quit racing?

SKILLY—It seems I just can't help it any more than Cataract can, but I'll try—hard.

BOB—That's the idea. And tomorrow we'll make more definite plans as to our partnership.

SKILLY—Thank you, Mr. Bob.

Enter Morris Stanton C D. Note—Increase storm effect.

BOB—Oh, good evening, Mr. Stanton.

STANTON—I've just been over my place, and your dam is backing up the water and washing out my ditches. I'll be flooded out in another hour.

BOB—As bad as that? I'll open the emergency, that will let it down.

STANTON—It wont be enough; unless you open the gate I'll be ruined.

BOB—No, I can't do that.

STANTON—Why not—you don't need all that water you've got stored up.

BOB—I know it, but if I open the gate now the valley below will be flooded.

STANTON—That isn't any affair of mine. The gates will have to be opened.

BOB—To open those gates now would send death and destruction down on hundreds of helpless people in the dead of night.

STANTON—I don't believe it—it's a trick to ruin me—

BOB—Ruin you? What object would I have in ruining you?

STANTON—Oh, I understand your object well enough since Lucy Holden broke her engagement.

BOB—It is not necessary to bring that lady's name into the discussion.

STANTON—Don't want to discuss it, eh? Think you can meddle in my affairs all you please and get away with it, do you?

BOB—That is not my intention. I only want you to understand now, that to open those gates would flood the valley.

STANTON—Well, that's your affair, not mine.

BOB—Do you mean that you'd drown those people like rats in a trap?

STANTON—Bah, they wont drown, the river will hold the water—

BOB—I'll not risk it.

STANTON—Well, I will.

BOB—Stop. Lay a hand on that machinery and I'll throw you into the river.

STANTON—(Covering Bob with revolver) Now I'm running this place and we'll do as I say. And since you're so damned afraid of what that water will do, we'll open the emergency and then the gate, but that water's going down.

Skilly, during Stanton's speech, looks around hopelessly; has idea as he looks at bottle on bench; quietly picks it up without moving from where he is standing; sticks mouth of bottle against Stanton's back.

SKILLY—No it aint Morse. Put 'em up Morse—easy now, before I blow out your brains. (Secures Stanton's revolver.) Much obliged, Morse. (Covers him.) Gee, I'm glad I got that. Nothing but lubricating oil in that bottle, Bob.

Bob and Skilly laugh. Morris angry.

BOB—Get out of here.

STANTON—Goes to door.) I'll get you yet.

SKILLY—On your way. (Stanton exits C D.)

BOB—Thank you Skilly. You certainly showed great presence of mind.

SKILLY—Just a little partnership work.

BOB—I wasn't afraid for myself, but I believe he would have been fool enough to open the gates.

SKILLY—It sure would have cleaned the valley.

BOB—We'll open the emergency, that will let the water down considerably.

SKILLY—Here, keep this for a souvenir. (Gives revolver to Bob.) Need the engine?

BOB—No, only when you open or close the gates.

Bob slowly turns brake. Indicator stops, then begins to go down slowly.

BOB—Works fine. No danger of a flood, either up or down.

Lucy enters, C D.

BOB—Why Lucy, what are you doing here? Nothing is wrong at your place is there?

LUCY—Oh, no. I was just interested in knowing if everything was all right here.

BOB—Things working fine. We've just opened the emergency.

LUCY—Too much water?

BOB—Yes, getting pretty high, but no danger now.

SKILLY—Say, Bob, guess I'd better be going up to the house; Sue's there alone.

BOB—All right, Skilly, and if Mose is through eating, send him down here.

SKILLY—All right. (Exits C D.)

LUCY—This will certainly test your new project.

BOB—Yes, and it is proving a success. And it means plenty of water for the dry season to come.

LUCY—I'm glad you have made such a success.

BOB—Thank you, Lucy. Don't you think I deserve a little reward now?

LUCY—Why—I suppose so—wont your returns from the sale of water rights be a reward?

BOB—Why I suppose so—but I kinda hoped we could take time now for that little ride.

LUCY—(Laughing.) Surely not tonight?

BOB—No, but when this rain is over it will be fine riding.

LUCY—All right, I'll go.

SKILLY(Outside.) Mr. Bob—Mr. Bob—(Enters C D.)

BOB—Well, what's the matter?

SKILLY—I just now saw Stanton across the dam on the bank.

BOB—Well, nothing wrong with that is there?

SKILLY—He was carrying a box and was acting awful suspicious.

BOB—I'll go see.

SKILLY—Perhaps you can see him from the window there.

Bob opens window, looks out. Skilly and Lucy look over his shoulder. Lightning flashes outside.

SKILLY—(Pointing.) There, see him!

BOB—Yes—what's he doing? There, he's throwing something.

Outside window small powder flash followed by explosion (Use bass drum for explosion.)

BOB—Dynamite! He's blowing up the dam. (Starts out.)

SKILLY—You can't get him Bob—

BOB—I've got to stop him—

SKILLY—In your side pocket—your side pocket—

BOB—My side pocket—(produces revolver.)

Bob at window with revolver. Second explosion. Bob fires.

SKILLY—Did you get him?

BOB—No, I don't think so.

Lightning flash. Bob fires again. Third explosion. Wood crash, off L. Indicator stops.

SKILLY—He's blown up the dam. (Rushes out C.)

BOB—You'd better get across to the bank. If the dam goes out this place will go. (Gets lantern.) Skilly will take you across.

LUCY—Aren't you going?

BOB—No, I'm going to try and open the gates slowly, that will relieve some of the pressure and perhaps prevent a sudden flood down the valley.

LUCY—But your life is in danger.

BOB—Not more so than those poor people down the valley.

Skilly enters hurriedly C.

SKILLY—You can't get across—the bridge is down.

BOB—Can you cross on the gate?

SKILLY—No—water going over it too fast.

LUCY—Does that mean we can't get out of here?

BOB—Yes.

LUCY—And there is danger?

BOB—Yes—if that gate breaks this place will be swept away.

SKILLY—It will flood the valley.

BOB—If there was only some way of warning them.

SKILLY—Somebody would have to move fast. I know—Cataract!

BOB—Cataract?

SKILLY—He could warn them.

BOB—How could he warn them?

SKILLY—I'll ride him. I've lied to you Mr. Bob—I've been racing him and he's ready now to prove himself. I'll ride him and warn them—

BOB—You can't get across—

SKILLY—Well I can try. (Rushes out C.)

Bob and Lucy watch from window. Lightning flashes.

BOB—See, there he is—at the gate—you can't get across there—now what's he doing—going down the side of the dam—I know—he's going under the fall—the gate won't hold him—there he goes under—

Lucy hides her face in her hands. Bob watches from window. A pause.

BOB—Lucy, he's made it. (Waving his hand.) Good bye, Skilly, and good luck. (To Lucy.) We could try the way Skilly got across.

They turn to door. Indicator suddenly jumps up and down, and indicates lowering of water.

BOB—Too late—the gate's giving way—it won't hold us.

He puts his arm around Lucy. They watch indicator, waiting for the end. Door C is opened, Mose standing in row boat, across doorway.

MOSE—You all better hurry up, or you'll be late for supper.

CURTAIN.

Second curtain. Bob, Lucy and Mose in boat. Mose singing, "Sailing, sailing," etc.

CURTAIN.

NOTE—If not possible to use boat effect, close thus:

MOSE—(Looking in at window) Heah, you folks Ise done got a boat out here, and if you all don't hurry up—you'll be late for supper.

CURTAIN.

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## ACT IV.—INTERIOR OF HORSE BARN AT STATE FAIR.

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Scene—Plain interior. Entrance R and L in 1. Window C, back. Bench R. Several bridles and blankets hanging on wall. Saddles on floor. Lights up.

Curtain—Mose heard off stage R.

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MOSE—Dar, Mr. Cataract, you am all done cleaned and polished and ready to win another race. (Horse heard.) Whoa, dar,—whoa—(Mose jumps through door R falls on stage.) Golly but dat hoss does think it lots of fun to kick dis nigger out of his stall. Huh, didn't hurt me none—I gotta pad. (Produces large roll of bills from each hip pocket.) Dat's what keeps you from getting hurt lots of times. Golly, aint been nothing to it but win eber since dat horse started to race. Easy money; guess I wont show dem niggers something when I go back to ole Kentucky.

Skilly enters R.

SKILLY—What you doing Mose?

MOSE—Counting my money.

SKILLY—Aw, what's the use? wait until the season's over then count it all at once.

MOSE—Dat's a good idea. Ise gwine to win some more today.

SKILLY—Listen, Mose, there's a new horse entered against Cataract today—they say he's a wonder.

MOSE—Can't beat dat Cataract horse.

SKILLY—No, but if you watch you might get better odds.

MOSE—Say, dats right. If you all done stay here, I'll go over and put up some money.

SKILLY—Here, put up some for me Mose. (Gives Mose money.)

MOSE—Keep close watch on dat horse, Skilly, and don't let nobody in.

SKILLY—I wont.

Sue enters, L.

MOSE—Say lady, you all can't come in heah—(Recognizes her). For de Lawd's sake, Missie Sue, I didn't recognize you in dem doll clothes.

SUE—(Affected manner.) Oh, dear me, Mose, this simple toylette? You should see me when I'm really bong swor.

MOSE—(Overcome, burlesque manner). For de Lawd's sake—bong swor. (Staggers.)

SKILLY—What have you been doing, Sue?

SUE—Oh, I've been having a most felicitous time.

MOSE—(Same)—For de Lawd's sake, fealiticious?

SKILLY—Well, come down to earth and tell us.

SUE—Well, I'm going to get my name in the papers.

MOSE—What did you all steal?

SUE—Didn't steal nothing. I was sitting over there in the am-pi-the-a-ter—

MOSE—(Admiringly.) Lawdy!

SUE—When this guy comes up and introduces himself and gives me his card. See, here it is. (Shows Skilly card.) He writes for the papers and he asked me all about Cataract, and where we come from and I told him how you rode ahead of the flood and warned the farmers and saved their lives when Stanton blew up the dam, and how Mose risked his life in that boat and saved Mr. Bob and Miss Lucy, and how Mr. Bob went broke when the dam was washed out, and how you persuaded him to put Cataract on the track, and how he was getting enough money to build another dam, and—(pauses for breath.)

MOSE—(Admiringly.) Lawdy!

SKILLY—Say, Sue, is this guy going to get out extra pages?

SUE—Well, I don't know, but I do know he's coming over after a while to take our pictures to put in the paper.

MOSE—For de Lawd's sake—dis nigger done gwine to get his picture in de paper—and no reward offered.

SKILLY—Maybe Mr. Bob wont want you to do all this.

SUE—Aw, shucks, if we hadn't advertised this family, where'd we be today?

SKILLY—That's right.

MOSE—If I'm done gwine to hab my picture in de paper Ise gwine to doll up.

SKILLY—Say, Mose, don't forget those bets.

MOSE—I wont—gwine to do it now. (Exits L.)

SKILLY—Gee, Sue, aint it great?

SUE—Sure is. And I'm awful glad for Mr. Bob's sake. He's made almost enough money to build another dam.

SKILLY—That's good. Say, Sue—

SUE—What, Skilly?

SKILLY—I've made a lot of money, too.

SUE—Have you?

SKILLY—Yep. Still thinking of going to school to learn to be a missionary to educate the heathen?

SUE—Yes, some.

SKILLY—Well—if Bob aint got the money to send you to school, I have—provided you'll be satisfied to teach one heathen when you come back.

SUE—(Shyly)—Say, Skilly—

SKILLY—What?

SUE—If I'm only going to educate one heathen—I don't believe I'll need that education.

SKILLY—Sue—do you mean it?

SUE—Yep.

They embrace. Bob and Lucy enter L. Bob carries field glasses in case over shoulder.

BOB—Here, what does this mean?

Skilly and Sue confused.

SKILLY—We're—we're just playing a game.

BOB—A game?

SKILLY—Yes, sir, Mr. Bob, it's called 'educating the heathen.'

BOB—Well, I don't know which is the heathen, but whoever is is certainly an apt scholar.

SKILLY—I'm the heathen.

SUE—And I've promised to educate him.

BOB—Well, then, I suppose congratulations are in order?

All shake hands.

BOB—And also some good news, too, Skilly; If we win this next race, we can quit and go back to the ranch.

SKILLY—Gee, that's good—and I'm sorry, too—I've been having a felicitous time.

BOB—Oh, have you?

SKILLY—Oh, yes. But I suppose we are bong swor here, so if you will watch Cataract Sue and I will go and bet some more.

BOB—All right, Skilly, but don't be too sure. There's a strange horse entered against us today they say is a wonder.

SKILLY—I've heard of him, but I don't care. I'll bring Cataract home a winner by a damn sight.

BOB—Well, Skilly, it means a dam site if you do.

SKILLY—Come on Sue, let's go bet.

Sue and Skilly exit L.

LUCY—They are certainly a happy pair.

BOB—Yes, they're good kids and I'm glad.

LUCY—Is there danger in this strange horse winning?

BOB—Well, such things have happened but I still have faith that Cataract and Skilly will be able to retire unbeaten.

LUCY—I hope so, and I'm glad this is the last race. Ever since this trip was started I have had a fear of something happening.

BOB—Why, what could happen?

LUCY—There is one that perhaps would give a great deal to stop Cataract's racing.

BOB—You mean—Stanton?

LUCY—Yes.

BOB—I don't think we need fear him. Since that night he blew up the dam he has not been near us.

LUCY—You don't think you shot him?

BOB—Oh, no, he has been seen since then.

LUCY—I'm glad you didn't, Bob.

BOB—So am I, Lucy. But there, let's talk of something else. This is my last day of racing. It was good of you to come down here to see the finish.

LUCY—Oh, I've been reading in the papers about Cataract, he's made a wonderful sensation.

BOB—He sure has, and now I'm going to take him back to the Frenchman and give him his reward.

LUCY—He may not appreciate a life of inactivity.

BOB—Oh, he will be busy enough, I hope. You going back to the ranch?

LUCY—Yes, I expect to.

BOB—That's good. Going to be busy?

LUCY—Why—not so very.

BOB—Then maybe we can take that ride.

LUCY—I think so.

BOB—Sometimes in the early morning, just as the sun is peeping up over the eastern hills we'll ride to meet him—sometimes in the evenings when the moon touches the Frenchman with silver we'll ride—you and I—shall we?

LUCY—Yes, Bob.

BOB—Well, Lucy, if Cataract wins this race so I can build that dam I'll ask you.

LUCY—The money doesn't make any difference to me, Bob.

BOB—Doesn't it, Lucy?

LUCY—No—Let's build the dam together, Bob.

BOB—Lucy, do you mean it?

They are about to embrace when Mose rushes in, L.

MOSE—Oh, Mr. Bob, Mr. Bob—(realizes what he has done) Oh, for de Lawd's sake.

BOB—What is it, Mose?

MOSE—De man over at de jedge's stand done want to see you.

BOB—All right, Mose. (Lucy exits L. Bob at door.)

BOB—Mose, when we get home I'm going to throw you in the river. (Exits L.)

MOSE—Lawdy, lawdy, de love bug am sure working overtime around here. Well, I'm glad of it, they'll make a fine couple.

Morris Stanton enters L, disguised. Carries camera.

MOSE—Here, hold on man, you all cant come in here.

STANTON—I have come to take the pictures we were talking to the young lady about.

MOSE—Golly, deys all ober to the track, but they'll be back in a minute.

STANTON—Can't you go tell them; it is very important we take the pictures while the light is good.

MOSE—Yes, sah, I knows right where dey are—I'll go get them. (Exits L.)

STANTON—That was easier than I expected. It was fortunate I happened to overhear that reporter talking to Sue. (Takes hyperdermic needle from pocket.) Now to give Cataract a little medicine, and my horse, 'the strange unknown,' will race home a winner, and Bob Randall will again be ruined. Damn him, he ruined me, and here is where I get even.

Stanton looks about cautiously, then exits R. Horse is heard moving off R; Stanton says, sharply, "Whoa." Sound of horse stamping, then Stanton staggers through door R, falls C, senseless. Bob heard off L.

BOB—(Off L.) I don't care if he does want to take a picture, you shouldn't have left Cataract alone.

Bob, Mose, Lucy, Skilly and Sue enter L.

BOB—Hello, what's this? (Lifts Stanton, discovers his disguise, removes it.)

ALL—Stanton!

SKILLY—He was trying to dope Cataract! (Rushes out R.)

BOB—(Discovers needle in Stanton's hand, examines it.) Well, he didn't—this hasn't been used.

MOSE—Golly, guess Cataract though dat was me, and took a little exercise.

LUCY—Is he—dead?

BOB—No, just stunned. (Skilly enters R.)

SKILLY—Cataract's all right. (Bugle heard in distance.)

SKILLY—That's our race.

BOB—Hurry up, Skilly—this is the last one, win it.

SKILLY—I will, Mr. Bob.

Skilly and Mose exit, R. Horse heard R, then leaving.

LUCY—Is there anything we can do for him?

BOB—No. He's coming too, now. (Assists Stanton to bench.)

STANTON—(Recovering.) What happened to me?

BOB—Horse kicked you. (Stanton recognizes others.)

BOB—Enough evidence here to send you to the pen, Stanton.

STANTON—Well, I don't care. I'd just as soon be there as broke. Your dam ruined my crops, but if I could have cleaned up on this horse of mine, I would soon be in the clear.

BOB—Is your horse the new unknown?

STANTON—Yes.

Sue gets field glasses from Bob, goes back to window, watches off through glasses. Lucy joins her.

BOB—Did you bet heavily?

STANTON—Yes, all I have left.

SUE—They're lining up for the start.

BOB—Give me your tickets. (Stanton gives Bob several tickets.)

BOB—If my horse wins, I'll return this amount to you. I don't care to win under such circumstances.

Cheering heard in distance.

SUE—They're off.

BOB—I expect this to be our last race. If you have a good horse, that will leave a clear field for you, and when you make a stake, quit, as I am doing. It's the only way you can beat this game.

SUE—I can see them—they're running neck and neck.

STANTON—I guess that's right. It's cost me everything.

BOB—One thing more before you go. Did Skilly rob that safe when you run him off the track?

STANTON—Skilly—No—Skilly is innocent.

SUE—Huh, I knew that all the time. (Uses glasses.)

BOB—That's all, you can go now.

SUE—(Looking.) They're still running neck and neck. Come on, Skilly, come on, Cataract.

BOB—I'll meet you at the judge's stand after the race.

Stanton exits L.

BOB—How's the race, Sue? What do you see?

SUE—They're still neck and neck. Now they're back of the building. (Runs to door, looks, back to window, excited.) Come on Skilly if you love me.

Cheering heard in distance.

BOB—Well, somebody's won.

Mose heard in distance.

MOSE—(Off L)—Mr. Bob—Mr. Bob—

BOB—Here comes Mose.

MOSE—(Nearer.) Mr. Bob—Mr. Bob—

BOB—Well, what is it?

Mose enters L, running.

MOSE—Mr. Bob, the race am ober—

BOB—I know it.

MOSE—Dat Cataract and dat strange horse done got away together and started around the track, and dey were neck and neck at de half—

SUE—Which won, Mose?

MOSE—Aint eber won, yet. Deys only at the half. And dey were neck and neck at the three-quarters—

SUE—Well, I know that—but which won?

MOSE—Aint eber won yet. Deys only at the three-quarters. Den dat Skilly boy done push on Cataract's neck jest a little and say—

SKILLY—(At door L.) Run like a dam site, Cataract.

MOSE—He shore did and come in two lengths ahead of the other horse.

SKILLY—That other horse is a dandy though, and with Cataract off the track, he's a sure winner.

BOB—I'm glad of it, and I'm also glad we are through with racing. Now we can all go back home and be happy. (To Lucy.) I guess we can have that ride now. (To audience.) And if any of you folks happen out our way we'll be glad to see you, "WHERE THE FRENCHMAN FLOWS."

Positions for Curtain—Mose, R; Bob and Lucy, C; Sue and Skilly, L.

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